

# The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter

June-July 2017

## God Provides a Way Forward for Weirton Christian Center Building Project

by Ms. Kim Weaver, director, Weirton Christian Center

In 2010, Weirton Christian Center's Board of Directors got together to set a strategic plan. At that time, our goal was determined as: Provide the community with a well-funded, professionally staffed, state-of-the-art facility that offers a safe place for children to be afterschool with life-shaping programs and influences that direct children to a relationship with the Lord.

We have had tremendous growth in the last ten years. We have grown from approximately 45 children in 2006 to 278 in 2015. We have continued to bring the Lord to our children every day! We have improved and expanded our programs, provided professional training for our staff and moved toward that state-of-the-art building.

God has given us a vision for a new building for our children and we are finally making this vision become a reality. After three different building plans and possible sites, we decided to build on the existing property and the adjacent property, which was purchased for us by the Christian Fellowship Foundation.

Our plan was to break ground in May 2017, so as not to lose \$125,000 of the funds raised that needed to be spent within one year. At the beginning of the year, we were blessed to have a local developer, with 45 years of commercial construction experience and supporter of the center, agree to look at our plans. After review, he determined it could potentially cost an additional \$200,000 to \$300,000 to build on Elm Street. This was devastating news and after asking Rev. Dr. Holley Faulkner, pastor of Weirton Heights Memorial Baptist Church (Panhandle), and our newest Weirton Christian Center Board member for prayers, we feel God has led us to the idea of building next to Weirton Heights Memorial Baptist Church on their vacant property. It was voted on by the church and they will be selling us that property to build on. We should be able to break ground by July 1, 2017. This will be a wonderful opportunity

for partnership, with volunteers and involvement with the church and a place for our families to potentially worship.

The Christian Fellowship Foundation has provided the funds to purchase the property. There are going to be additional expenses, but our contractor has agreed to cover the cost of the structural engineer and core drilling, and is currently working with a new architect. We will need to add 800 square feet to the bottom floor because we will be losing storage areas at the original location, and there will be additional costs for bringing utilities to the building. Since the church was in need of a parking lot, they will provide us with the funds they have raised for the ten spaces they will retain and we will have another 26 spaces that all can share. Since the architectural drawings are not yet complete, we do not have a new total project cost, but our contractor will be value engineering and we are still raising funds, with many grants and requests still pending. We still have to cover the entire cost of the project to completion with no debt before we start.

In 2015, at the Executive Board meeting, it was agreed we could present the project to our West Virginia Baptist family to try to raise a goal of \$150,000. To date, we have

been able to raise \$92,527 from churches and individuals and the West Virginia American Baptist Women's Ministries' Special Preschool Project has provided us with \$14,307. Many thanks to our wonderful, faithful West Virginia Baptist family in all your many efforts to see this building come to fruition! Funding raised for this project as of April 30, 2017 totals \$743,944, and that is just \$19,956 away from original goal of \$763,900. The matching funds have been received and both foundations have agreed to not withdraw their funding from us, due to the circumstances and the project still moving forward. We cannot thank you all enough for bringing us to this place.



The mission of the West Virginia Baptist Convention is to **empower** local churches to be Christ honoring communities of faith and to help them fulfill their mission by **enabling** them to do together what they cannot do alone.

by David L. Carrico, Executive Minister



**There's an App for That!**

The West Virginia Baptist Convention app is available for Android and Apple products. Download yours today!

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## Table of Contents

Commentary: Jesus Called - He Wants His Church Back **2**

Executive Committee Report/Spitzer called as ABCUSA General Secretary **3**

One Great Hour of Sharing West Virginia Flood Relief Report **4**

Thinking Missions: An Unexpected Journey/Camp Global 2017 **5**

West Virginia Program of Palmer Seminary Celebrates Much at Annual Graduation Banquet **6**

Transformed by Grace and Love - Transformado por la Gracia y el Amor **7**

Parchment Valley Conference Center: Ripe for Harvest/Worship Conference **8**

Students Ponder "Who am I in Christ?" at Omega Youth Event/Adult Discipleship - Phantom of Devotion **9**

Lubeck Community Mission Team Travels to Nicaragua **10**

Southeast and Southwest Area News **11**

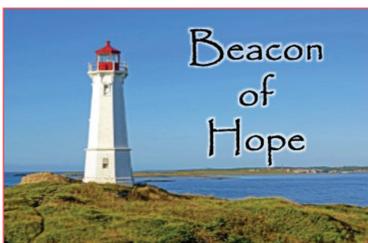
Northwest and Northeast Area News **12**

Obituaries: November 2016-April 2017 **13**

Obituaries Continued/2017 Cowen Schedule/Annual Meeting Promo **14**

Prayer Calendars: June and July 2017 **15**

Coming Events: June-July 2017/ American Baptist Women's Ministries' Conference **16**



## Jesus Called - He Wants His Church Back



Dr. David Carrico

It has been widely stated that over three-fourths of the established churches in North America are either declining or plateauing, which results in their inability to effectively make disciples. There are many reasons for the situation, including pressure from cultural shifts and changing technologies. It is past time to think of the context of the North American church and to revisit our ecclesiology, Christology and missiology to educate ourselves and our leaders to reconnect with Jesus and reintroduce the church to Jesus. We have growing ethnic populations calling out for ministry here and now. There are emerging expressions of church that are challenging fundamental assumptions marking a break with 2,000 years of church history and tradition. Complacency grips many of our ministries and our ministers as they search for a spirit of health to heal our land.

It is easy to get lost in theory as we explore how to rethink and retool the effectiveness of the church. First, we must find practical and flexible ways to meet the needs of our churches and leaders. Most of the time if you ask folks what they need, they will tell you. But it becomes a problem when you give them what they ask for and they don't respond. Many times as pastors minister at their church's request, the people complain that the message is there, but it is not developed the way they wish. While the emphasis should be on the cargo (the message), people tend to focus more on the vehicle (how the message is delivered). Sometimes the cargo is lost in the delivery.

In the midst of all the drama and trauma, there is hope. There are emerging expressions of church that are not like the past 2,000 years of history. People still love Jesus - it is with the church they find difficulty. All of us need to listen more and talk less in order to find common ground to do ministry. I find it interesting the early church did not vote on many issues, but rather worked to build consensus and serve the Lord. Consensus building does take time, but it seems to be less painful and more productive in service to the kingdom.

One of the problems that plague our communities today is drug usage and drug overdose. The media shares the reality of the cost of Narcan to deal with heroin overdose without ever touching on the underlying drug problem. The government, from local to national, attempts to address the problem, yet the church remains silent. It is past time that we, the church, started looking for answers together - in consensus with one another.

As this issue has become prominent in the public discourse there have been church programs founded to address the drug problem. While these programs have been a starting point, some fail to be effective if they stand alone. Each church can address this issue while intentionally seeking God's will for their community. If each community of faith would take action to address this issue, positive things would happen to bring hope. Consensus - strength in numbers!

Are you asking, "Where do we start?"

- *Have a church dialogue about your community. Invite other community churches to join you.*
- *Invite helping agencies to come alongside you and build a partnership of hope.*
- *Establish a plan to target the needs of those looking for hope - do something!*
- *Seek out and study God-centered, biblically-based programs. Visit other churches with these programs already in place.*

One of the national programs that is finding success throughout West Virginia is **CELEBRATE RECOVERY**, a biblically-based program that helps those who are struggling with hurts, hang-ups and habits by showing them the loving power of Jesus Christ through the recovery process. More information about this program may be found at [www.celebraterrecovery.com](http://www.celebraterrecovery.com).

Pray about what your church can do and then do it! Be the church that belongs to Jesus. Jesus wants His church back to love and change people for an abundant life!

*Blessings*

# Executive Committee Report

**RIPLEY** - In its meeting of May 5, 2017, the Executive Committee of the West Virginia Baptist Convention received notice from Rev. Juan Aragon that his final day of employment with the Convention would be May 31, 2017. Aragon had previously informed



Rev. Juan Aragon

the Committee of his call to serve as a missionary to Chiapas, Mexico with International Ministries (IM) with his start date with IM to be determined. His notice of his official end date, while expected, was received with mixed emotions. Aragon said, "The West Virginia Baptist Convention embraced and adopted us as family. We are deeply grateful for that. We thank you for your partnership in our

new journey as we become your missionaries to Chiapas, Mexico." Aragon's ministry with the Convention was celebrated by the Board with a special lunch to recognize his many contributions these past eight years.

The Executive Committee also received a letter from Rev. Dr. Max Hill announcing his retirement effective December 31, 2017. Hill joined the staff of the Convention as an Area Minister in 2004. He has served as the Associate Executive Minister of Missions and Ministry since 2006. Hill has contributed greatly to the work of the Convention over these past 12 years. In retirement, he will con-



Rev. Dr. Max Hill

tinue to pursue his passion for mission work to Cuba, hoping to help more churches and individuals participate in that mission.

The Executive Committee received an update from the Executive Minister Search Committee outlining the projected timeline for the search process. It is expected the job description will be completed soon after the survey closes. It is likely the position will be officially posted and the committee ready to receive resumes by June 15, 2017. President Rev. Mark Wood, President advised the Committee the discernment process takes time and asked for patience as we trust God for guidance and clarity as to whom is being called to lead the Convention as its next Executive Minister.

## Spitzer Called as ABCUSA General Secretary

On Monday, May 8, 2017, the Board of General Ministries met at Springhill Suites in Chicago to elect Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer to the position of General Secretary of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. Dr. Spitzer's name was brought forward to the Board of General Ministries by the General Secretary Search Committee. Over the past several months the Search Committee had interviewed numerous candidates. After much prayer, discernment and deep discussion, the Committee identified Dr. Spitzer as the candidate best suited to lead American Baptists forward.



Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer

Photo provided by American Baptist Churches of New Jersey website:  
<https://www.abcnj.net>.

Currently, Dr. Spitzer serves as Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches in New Jersey (ABCNJ). He has served congregations in New Jersey, Nebraska and Rhode Island. Dr. Spitzer brings a wide range of experience and expertise to his new role as General Secretary. In ABCNJ, he guided a strategic planning and renewal process, provided pastoral leadership, launched new ministries and collaborative efforts, created networks and new partnerships, promoted church growth, fostered a united community and managed financial growth. He continues to speak prophetically into current issues and concerns. Dr. Spitzer has authored Endless Possibilities: Exploring the Journeys of Your Life (1997), the companion Endless Possibilities Course Book (2001), A Summer's Journey (2001), three articles for the Encyclopedia of Religious and Spiritual Development (Sage, 2006) and Jesus Christ from Cover to Cover (2006). In his first

Judson Press book, Making Friends, Making Disciples (2010), he explores the pivotal role friendship plays in support of the church's mission to make disciples and evangelize. Dr. Spitzer's newest Judson Press book, Baptists, Jews and the Holocaust: The Hand of Sincere Friendship, is scheduled for release in October 2017.

His goal as General Secretary is "to lead ABCUSA into a future of spiritual renewal, creative service and church growth, in joyful cooperation with all partners of the American Baptist family." His efforts as General Secretary will be directed toward strengthening connections with ABC regions, affirming and enhancing our diversity, reaching out to the next generation of leaders, growing trust and collaboration, strengthening our American Baptist identity and providing administrative leadership in areas of stewardship, funding and fiduciary concerns. Dr. Spitzer will be preaching on Sunday morning, July 2, 2017, at the American Baptist Biennial Mission Summit in Portland, Oregon.

American Baptist Churches USA President, Judy Fackenthal, wishes to extend her gratitude to the work and ministry of the General Secretary Search Committee: Wesley Roberts (Committee vice-chair), Robin Crouch, Shirley Fair, Kelly Legg, Charity Matic, Don Ng, Marcia Patten, Charles Revis, Don Robinson, Tom Ross and John Williams, along with ABC staff member, Marilyn Tyson.

Dr. Spitzer will begin his service as General Secretary on June 1, 2017.

# One Great HOUR OF SHARING WEST VIRGINIA Flood Relief Report

*I was hungry and you gave me food. Matthew 25:35*

**You are here**



*“You are here” with survivors of the West Virginia floods.*

THANK YOU for your generosity and volunteer efforts that are truly making a difference in the lives of those impacted by the June floods in Southern West Virginia. West Virginia Baptist Convention churches responded in a tremendous way to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering: West Virginia Flood Relief. One hundred seventy thousand dollars was sent from 100 churches and over \$50,000 was sent from individuals. We will partner with our brothers and sisters in Christ to rebuild communities: one life - one church - one home at a time until the work is done.

Donations of food, water, cleaning supplies, diapers, paper goods and even pet food have been collected by many churches and taken to central distribution stations to help people in need.

Grant requests from 20 churches have been fulfilled, meeting the needs of families in their community. The monies disbursed have been used to purchase dehumidifiers, lime, mold removing products, housing, food, washers and dryers, dishes, other appliances, towels, sheets, heaters and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) for homes and churches. Teams worked in the flooded areas doing cleanup and reconstruction. Over 25,000 man hours have been reported from the American

Baptist Men Disaster Relief team working in Rainelle, Clendenin and Elkview areas.

## **You are here: Rainelle**



A warehouse in Rainelle was setup to collect and distribute furniture to those getting back into their homes. As part of the distribution, a grant was given from the One Great Hour of Sharing West Virginia Flood Relief to buy over 300 mattress sets. The bedding sets were given to families as they resettled into their homes.

## **You are here: Richwood**



Richwood First Baptist Church (Hopewell) used the flood relief funds granted to purchase air conditioners to help two families move from emergency shelters and back into their homes. Leslie Carpenter, member of Richwood First Baptist Church says, “Because of your gift, we were able to help these families. God has helped us be a blessing to them and now they are attending our church as a result of being ministered to since the flood. They have been touched by the outstretched arms of Jesus. We pray God will continue to let us minister alongside Him as we share the gospel with people of the Richwood area.”

## **You are here: Spencer**



Rev. Mark Wood, pastor of Spencer First Baptist Church (Good Hope), tells of the major role his church played in the establishment and operation of the Roane County Long Term Recover Team (RCLTRT). “Over a dozen members have served and continue to serve in the long term recovery relief efforts. Although our town was spared from flooding, our neighbors in the southern part of the county were not so fortunate. Since the flooding, the RCLTRT has purchased homes, renovated homes and constructed homes for those who



were displaced. Starting with over 100 cases, we now, ten months into this, still have 25 cases open. Because of the faithfulness of our West Virginia Baptist Convention family in giving to flood relief, we have been able to directly assist 12 families, from a young single mother of three children to an 84 year-old woman. The grant of \$20,000 we received was used to purchase HVAC units for these individuals. On April 28, 2017, we were able to celebrate the dedication of three new homes.”

## **You are here: Clendenin**



Our church, Clendenin First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) was devastated. The parsonage, the main part of the church and our activities’ building were all greatly affected by the flood. The water filled the basement level and rose into the sanctuary and the first floor living space of the parsonage, with at least five-six feet of water filling the activities’ building. The parsonage is now livable, the sanctuary is being used every Sunday and the activities’ building was used as a relief center in the days following the flood. But there is still so much needed by our church, church family and community!

In the early days, post flood, we had quite a bit of help, however, with the flood now being a year old,



other things have garnered more attention. As we still struggle with many issues, we are more than thankful and so appreciative of the many volunteers who have come from as far away as Massachusetts and Alabama to help us rebuild, repaint, pick up and so much more, so we can continue our ministry as a church. Through prayer, God’s help and the love and help of volunteers throughout the area, we will persevere and be stronger for having survived and endured the flood of 2016.

by **John Simmons**, Associate Executive Minister  
Missions and Administration

## An Unexpected Journey



In J.R.R. Tolkien's classic tale The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, he describes the adventures of Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit that is somehow chosen for a daring mission. The book, published in 1937, is filled with all sorts of creatures, danger, intrigue and lots of adventure. This was quite the surprise for Bilbo, who was accustomed to his ordinary life in the Shire. Gandalf the Grey obviously saw something in Bilbo that Bilbo himself never knew about himself.

It was twenty years ago Lisa and I left for Thailand to serve as missionaries. We had never before considered missionary service. Yet God called us out of our ordinary lives and took us on an unexpected journey. That journey has taken us around the world many times. That journey has taken us to hundreds of churches in West Virginia and across the country. That journey has let us meet lots of interesting people and join with them on their journeys.

Lisa and I had the privilege to join Rev. Juan and Denise Aragon in San Marcos, Nicaragua - the place of Juan's childhood. We were there to do mission and to help the

churches celebrate God's call of Juan and Denise to missionary service. For you see, Juan and Denise have had their own unexpected journey. Nine years ago, they accepted an invitation to come to West Virginia. They packed up everything they owned into four suitcases and journeyed to a place where the only people they knew were the folks they met from West Virginia who were on a recent mission trip to Nicaragua.

The journey, as most are prone to do, did not go as planned. The opportunities for jobs and "the good life in the United States" did not materialize. But God's plan for them was that Juan was to serve as staff for the West Virginia Baptist Convention to help grow its new ministry to Hispanics. Now, after eight years of faithful service in West Virginia, Juan and Denise will soon continue their journey as they go to Chiapas, Mexico as International Ministries' missionaries.

It has been a great privilege to work with Juan and Denise these past nine years. It has been inspiring to watch them grow in their faith and go with God. I will be forever grateful God allowed us to walk together on both of our unexpected journeys.

I, like Bilbo, have been forever changed by the journey God had for me. And I cannot help but wonder that God is calling others from their ordinary lives - that God is calling you to go on an unexpected journey.

*Committed to Missions*

# CAMP GLOBAL 2017

## Family Mission Camp

*We Are - Matthew 5:14*

**August 11-13, 2017**  
**Camp Cowen**

**Cost: \$90 per person**

**\$350 maximum per household**

**\$40 Saturday only**

**Programming for children, youth and adults!**

**Camp begins Friday, August 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. and concludes Sunday, August 13, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.**



**Bible Study Leader:**  
**Ron Stoner, Retired pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley)**

**Missionary Guests:**  
**Keith and Debbie Myers, International Ministries**



**Missionary Guests:**  
**Juan and Denise Aragon, International Ministries**

**Missionary Guest:**  
**Debbie Mulneix, International Ministries**



**Details and registration available online at [www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org). For more information, contact Joan at 304.422.6449 or [hall@wvbc.org](mailto:hall@wvbc.org).**

### Schedule

#### Friday

7:00 - 7:30 p.m. - Opening, Music and Introductions  
7:30 - 8:00 p.m. - Vespers  
8:15 - 9:00 p.m. - Store and Evening Activities

#### Saturday

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. - Breakfast  
9:00 a.m. - Hands on Activities  
10:30 a.m. - Gathering Music in Hylbert Hall, Bible Study, Discussion Groups  
12:00 p.m. - Lunch  
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. - Gathering Music, Mission Moments  
2:00 - 4:00 p.m. - Elective Options  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m. - Conversations about Mission Calling  
5:30 p.m. - Dinner  
6:30 p.m. - Intergenerational Games  
7:15 p.m. - Vespers  
8:00 p.m. - Store and Evening Activities

#### Sunday

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. - Breakfast  
9:00 - 10:30 a.m. - Gathering Music, Adult Bible Study  
10:30 - 10:45 a.m. - Break  
10:45 a.m. - Gathering for Worship, Sermon  
12:00 p.m. - Lunch

# Palmer Seminary

by Allan Copenhaver, West Virginia Recruiter and Site Coordinator

## West Virginia Program of Palmer Seminary Celebrates Much at Annual Graduation Banquet

Palmer Seminary had a lot to celebrate at its annual graduation banquet held at Parchment Valley Conference Center on March 21, 2017. We celebrated the upcoming graduation of Mr. Evan Arkell, pastor of Barboursville Baptist Church (Guyandotte) and Mr. Eric Seckman, associate pastor of City Soul Ministries (Parkersburg). Both are receiving a Master of Divinity Degree. The night also marked the 25th anniversary of the seminary's presence in West Virginia.

The evening began with a welcome from the West Virginia Palmer program director, Dr. Allan Copenhaver. Dr. David Carrico, executive minister of the West Virginia Baptist Convention, offered the invocation prior to the meal. After the meal was finished, Arkell and Seckman had the honor of cutting the cake.

The program commenced with greetings from Dr. Bob Duffett, president of Eastern University and Palmer Seminary. He complimented the program's founder, the late Dr. Bob Matherly, for his vision of seminary education in West Virginia. The audience then heard from several individuals who have a long history with the program.

Ms. Ruth McFarland is a name synonymous with Palmer Seminary. She has held several roles with the seminary, including her current role as alumni director. She was the registrar when the program was introduced to West Virginia; this meant McFarland was the one with the most hands-on interaction with students. Twenty-five years later she is still closely connected and equally passionate about the program.

Rev. Ed Rogers spoke about his experience as a student. He was part of the original group of students and due to transfer credit, he was one of the first two graduates from the program.

While serving as pastor of South Parkersburg Baptist Church, Rogers directed numerous students to the program.

Dr. Lloyd Hamblin shared about the program from the perspective of his former role as executive minister of the West Virginia Baptist Convention. It was during his tenure the Santrock Education Center Building was built with one of its primary purposes being a home to the seminary. Hamblin currently serves as administrator of the Bowen Trust scholarship, which most of the West Virginia Palmer students receive.



Left to right: Dr. David Bronkema, interim dean of Palmer Seminary; Rev. Eric Seckman, 2017 M.Div. graduate; Rev. Evan Arkell, 2017 M.Div. graduate; and Dr. Bob Duffett, president of Eastern University

Dr. Don Brash is the longest tenured professor coming to West Virginia. He spoke about his love for the program. Brash, who also serves as the faculty director of the D.Min. program, encouraged current and future graduates to consider pursuing a doctoral degree.

The final event of the evening was the presentation of the Matherly Award. This recognition is presented in memory of Dr. Bob Matherly to someone who has aided in the success of the West Virginia program. This year's recipient was Dr. David Carrico. Dr. Allan Copenhaver presented him the award and acknowledged how instrumental Dr. Carrico has been in strengthening the West Virginia Baptist Convention's relationship with the seminary. Carrico served as Bob Matherly's pastor at Beckley First Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh) before assuming his current role.



Alums of Palmer Seminary's West Virginia Program who were present at the annual banquet.

Attention now turns toward the fall semester. Potential students should contact Allan Copenhaver at 304.763.8564 or [rcopenha@eastern.edu](mailto:rcopenha@eastern.edu). Scholarships are available for eligible students.

## *Transformed by Grace and Love - Transformado por la Gracia y el Amor*

When Denise and I responded to God's call nine years ago, we had no idea what that meant or looked like. We had been married just a little over two years and had a burning desire to serve God and share His love and grace with others. As Denise says, "We didn't want to be 'bench warmers.'" In faith, we followed the signposts God gave us. We didn't know what God had planned, but there was a sense of peace in our hearts when we made the decision to come to West Virginia. We knew He was leading us here.

When relatives and friends asked us, "Where will you live? Where are you going to work?" All we could say was: "We don't know." Few understood. Some thought we were out of our minds by moving to a place where we didn't know anyone, didn't have jobs let alone a place to live. Yes! It was certainly an adventure of faith and obedience. At the beginning when challenging times struck, I fretted, got mad at God and thought I had made the greatest mistake of my life by coming here. God still had work to do in my heart. Fortunately, I was not alone on the journey. Denise, with great courage and faith, kept reminding me God would show us His plan. Today I'm glad I listened!

The word "ebenezer" - up to here the Lord has helped us - describes how we feel about this season. As is often the case of those who join God's mission, our lives have been transformed (see Acts 10) by grace and love. God has used this beautiful state and its amazing people to change and shape our lives. I would like to highlight some of the ways you have changed our lives.

First, your obedience, faithfulness and generosity. We have witnessed the steps of faith you've taken in response to what God's called you to do. In obedience and faithfulness, you've embraced and loved people unlike you because God

called you to do so. You are a paragon of generosity. You have shown us what it means to be stewards of God's resources. Your generosity springs from gratitude and the willingness to bless people in our state and around the world.

Second, you've shown us the power of working together as a family to accomplish remarkable things: providing for a family that lost everything in a fire, paying for funeral expenses, hosting dinners to raise funds for medical care or donating with open hands resources for flood victims. You have beautifully embodied the words of Ruth Padilla Deborst "the only way to make the good news known is if we live it out as community... faithful testimony of the good news is a community affair only fully carried out by a body of people woven together by Christ's reconciling work."

Lastly, you've been a superb model in what it means to take seriously God's call to make disciples of all nations. You have shown us size doesn't matter to play a role in God's global mission. We have seen small rural churches joining forces to sponsor missionaries and projects to impact with Christ's love the lives of people in Mexico, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Japan, Philippines, Russia, Hungary, South Africa and many other nations. We have been blessed and "infected" by your passionate commitment to God's mission across the world.

We can only pray as we start a new season in our lives and serve as your missionaries in Chiapas, Mexico, we may faithfully teach others with our lives what you have taught us with your very own lives. West Virginia Baptist Convention family: thank you! We love you!

*Blessings*



*The Aragon family: Juan, Juancito, Hefziba and Denise prepare to begin their missionary journey in Chiapas, Mexico.*

*Denise and Juan will serve in partnership with the Council of Rural Indigenous Evangelicals of Mexico (Consejo Indígena Campesino Evangélico de México, CICEM) in Chiapas, Mexico. They will both work in training, prevention and education as they learn the community needs and look for ways to emotionally and economically empower leaders in their communities. Juan will focus on theological education and leadership training as he accompanies, coaches and disciples new church leaders. Denise's ministry will seek to empower women, especially those who are victims of domestic abuse.*

## Ripe For Harvest

The Parchment Valley Conference Center, West Virginia University Small Farms Center, West Virginia Extension, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance and Minutemen Farmers' Cooperative incubator training farm is partnering to provide a Specialty Crop Growers' Training Program in Ripley. This program will target veterans located in West Virginia and adjacent states as well as others wishing to learn and have support in starting up farming operations. The Specialty Crop Growers' Training Program is scheduled to start in 2017 with a Department of Labor approved apprenticeship program making veterans eligible for G.I. (Government Issue) benefits to support their training efforts as well as profits from what they grow while in training. The apprenticeship program is a two-year full-time training program supported by an optional two more years, if needed, for incubating new



Christy Wilburn, Specialty Crop Grower's Apprentice

specialty crop farming businesses and/or continued training and support of individuals looking for employment.

Most of the \$8.35 billion of food consumed in West Virginia is not purchased from producers and/or processors in the state; therefore, the impact of the effort on the community will be enormous. The impact will include incubating more local farms/farmers in West Virginia, creating more local jobs working for these new businesses, creating the type of training/work that is rehabilitating for many people, creating local wealth by producing more new products, impacting local food security and creating a healthier food supply.

The Parchment Valley Conference Center is an ideal venue with great infrastructure for the incubator training farm. The mission of the Minutemen Farmers' Cooperative incubator farm and Parchment Valley Conference Center will both be enhanced by the partnership and lives will be blessed by spending time here and experiencing a Christian atmosphere of faith.

West Virginia Baptist Convention

# Worship Conference

Saturday, June 24, 2017

Clarksburg Baptist Church

9:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

**Cost: \$15.00 per person**

Register four from one church and get the 5th person free until June 1, 2017. After June 1, \$25.00 per person.

### Workshops

#### *The Heart of Worship*

A look at worship and ways to be more focused in worship, plus a discussion of ways pastors and leaders can facilitate more involvement of the congregation.

#### *First Impressions*

An opportunity for pastors and leaders to learn how to make welcome teams an invaluable part of the worship ministry of the church. You only get one chance to make a first impression!

#### *Working with Praise Teams*

Rehearsals are for learning new music, working through intros, transitions and scriptures, as we learn to love and work with one another.

#### *(Vocal) Band of Brothers (and Sisters)*

A sharing and caring session for choir directors, including discussion on strategies and techniques for strengthening church choir performances and fellowship.

#### *Working with Audio*

An opportunity for those who operate audio equipment, whether beginner or seasoned, to learn skills, techniques and other aspects of this important part of worship.

#### *Working with Visuals*

An opportunity for those who prepare and operate video presentations for worship to gain new skills and techniques, to address questions and review the fundamentals of effective graphic communication in the context of worship.

### 2017 Worship Conference Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Church: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Workshop Choices:

Morning: \_\_\_\_\_

Afternoon: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to: West Virginia Baptist Convention and mail to: West Virginia Baptist Convention, Attn: Donna, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, WV 26102-1019.

Deadline for \$15.00 fee is June 15. \$25.00 after June 15.

## Students Ponder “Who am I in Christ?” at Omega Youth Event

“Who am I in Christ?” This is an ever evolving question for a continually growing relationship. If Christians asked themselves this question daily, what would our thoughts and actions look like and how would we view ourselves differently? Beyond our view of ourselves, how would the world view us and what would we say about who we are?

The Student Ministries of the West Virginia Baptist Convention has unpacked the question of who we are in Christ through our 2017 yearly events, by navigating through the theme “Dead I, New I, Ask Why?” At Omega, on April 22, 2017 at Genesis Fellowship (Kanawha Valley), 82 students and leaders from across the state met and studied together how they should “Ask Why?” of themselves to enable them to



Students listen as a YMPT member teaches by example how to share their own testimony.

answer the question when someone else asks it of them. This closing event of the year was a great time of fellowship, teaching and worship as students and leaders met together to close out this year’s theme. During the morning, worship was led by the Genesis Fellowship Praise Band. Students were also rotated between three speakers for their time of teaching before enjoying a grilled out lunch. The afternoon activities included games and testimonies shared by the Youth Ministry Planning Team (YMPT) members.



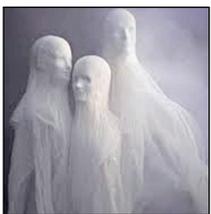
Youth Ministry Planning Team graduating seniors pictured with Rob Ely. from left: Joshua Eastman, Abigail Harman, Glenn Harman and Andrew O’Callaghan

Omega weekend was also a good time to thank and wish well the graduating seniors of the Youth Ministry Planning Team and to welcome in the new leaders on the 2017-2018 team. We are excited to begin planning for the 2017-2018 year and see how God leads this new group.

## Discipleship Ministries

by Lisa Simmons, Director

### Adult Discipleship - Phantom of Devotion



Francis de Sales was a priest in France, and in time became a bishop of Geneva, Switzerland. Most Baptists would not be familiar with his work, however he was a prolific writer and focused on the spiritual life by using simple, everyday images as Jesus did.

In his writing titled *Introduction to the Devout Life*, de Sales writes about the “phantoms of devotion.” These are people who are not truly devout on the inside, but put on a great show on the outside. De Sales says, “... many persons clothe themselves with certain outward actions connected with holy devotion, and the world believes they are truly devout and spiritual whereas they are in fact nothing but copies and phantoms of devotion.” (From *One True Devotion*)

What is a phantom? Definitions range from the word ghost to something that is in appearance only, something that has no substance, an object of continual dread and abhorrence, something apparent to the senses with no substantial existence and a figment of the imagination.

Using these definitions as a foundation, we can understand a Christian phantom of devotion is a person with no real substance to their devotion to God. They are like actors in a play, who give a good performance, but the character is someone they portray, not who they really are. Is this the kind of devotion God wants from us?

Interestingly, in several Old Testament passages the word ‘devotion’ is preceded by the Hebrew word “tamim,” which has been translated wholehearted, resolute or entirely committed. (see Deuteronomy 18:13, II Kings 20:3, I Chronicles 28:9 and Isaiah 28:3) The Greek word “katharos,” translated pure or unmixed is used in the New Testament paired with the word devotion. The meaning should be clear to the Christian reader. We are to be wholeheartedly, resolutely, purely and without divided heart, entirely committed. Are we perfect? No! There will be times when we are not able to reach the goal. However with God’s help, we will not be phantoms, but real and certain followers.

# Lubeck Community Mission Team Travels to Nicaragua

by Dr. Mike Stephens, member,  
Parkersburg Baptist Temple (Parkersburg)

The Lubeck Community Baptist Church mission team, led by Pastor Mark Houser, Cecily Thompson and Kenny Johnson traveled to San Marcos, Nicaragua February 17-25, 2017. The group worked alongside Pastor Rodolpho Amaya and the young dynamic leadership of Iglesia Bautista Jehovah Yireh for a series of community outreach and ministry events. The team from Lubeck also included: Deanna Boggs, Kristin Cingley, John Dixon, Rich Sell, Mike Stephens, Tommy Thompson and Julie Wolfe. The group conducted Vacation Bible School Sunday through Tuesday with about 250 youngsters participating. Pastors Mark, Mike and John preached in special services and Pastor Mark and Mike presented workshops on The Work and Importance of the Holy Spirit (Mike) and The Importance of Prayer (Mark) to about 40 pastors on Monday.

The group also went to each class at the 500 student Escuela Angel Miguel (public school) in San Marcos, where they shared Biblical skits and refreshments on Tuesday morning. On Wednesday morning, the team did ministry and painting at the Arms of Love orphanage in Jinotepe.

Thursday morning featured ministry with Hogar Senil Bautista, the Nicaraguan Baptist nursing home in Managua, started by Arturo Parajon, then pastor of Managua First Baptist Church in 1944. Arturo was the grandfather of American Baptist Churches International Ministries' missionary David Parajon, Executive

Director of AMOS Health and Hope, the medical ministry at Clinica Samaritano in the Managua suburb of Nejapa with clinics in rural communities all over Nicaragua. On Thursday afternoon, the team did street evangelism a few blocks from the church, visiting homes and inviting children, presenting a gospel message featuring puppets, dancing, skits and

study with women who shared heart-rending and hope-giving stories of God's faithfulness in a culture where women are too often marginalized, abandoned and separated from spouses and families.

The team was able to leave funds for about ten scholarships for college and seminary as well as to aid the pastor in



Some of the 250 youngsters who participated in Vacation Bible School at Iglesia Bautista Jehovah Yireh Sunday through Tuesday.



Worship Team at Iglesia Bautista Jehovah Yireh (God Provides Baptist Church) with banner showing the church theme: Year for Restoration of the Family and Vacation Bible School theme: Made with a Purpose.

clowns. About 50 children and their parents attended. Food and snacks were distributed with each event, spiritual seeds were planted and some harvested. On Thursday evening, Cecily, Julie, Deanna and Kristin led a women's conference, with about 30 women and girls from the community. The event featured Bible

completing his home. The group has seen steady progress over the five years this church has been in existence, starting from a few people meeting in homes to nearly 300 meeting, on some occasions, in a nearly completed building. This growth comes out of home cell groups, demonstrating God's ability to change lives and bring hope in desperate situations.

Pastor Rodolpho has a great vision to revitalize churches all over Nicaragua as well as to challenge churches to engage in mission and ministry beyond their walls -- in particular in their support of the Baptist Nursing Home, where residents are too often dumped and abandoned by family members.

The church and team have been supported greatly by International Ministries missionaries' Juan Aragon, native to San Marcos and Mayra and Carlos Bonilla-Giovanetti, who have trained pastors there. Though not physically present this year, Juan and Mayra still maintained support and vigilance from West Virginia and Puerto Rico respectively. The group is also thankful for the prayer and financial support of Lubeck Community Baptist Church and West Virginia Baptist Convention families.

## Southeast Area News

**Jim Anderson**, Southeast Area Minister

### ***Elk Valley Association Hosts Annual Picnic***

The Elk Valley Association hosted its annual picnic at Holly Gray Park near Sutton on April 15, 2017, where members from Birch River Baptist Church (Elk Valley), Big Union Baptist Church (Elk Valley), Sutton Baptist Church (Elk Valley), Stump Chapel Baptist Church (Elk Valley), Holly River Baptist Church (Elk Valley) and Long Run Baptist Church (Elk Valley) enjoyed a beautiful day of food, fun and fellowship. Southeast Area Minister, Rev. Jim Anderson, shared a devotion and song after a wonderful meal and activities for all ages continued all afternoon.

### ***Hopewell Baptist Association Holds 10th Annual Choir Festival***

On April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday evening, churches of the Hopewell Baptist Association gathered at Open Arms Baptist Church (Hopewell) for the 10th annual Hopewell Association Choir Festival. Rev. John Tinnel, pastor of Open Arms Baptist Church emceed the evening as choirs from Millbrook Baptist

Church (Hopewell), Mountain Baptist Church (Hopewell), Lovers Leap Baptist Church (Hopewell) and Open Arms Baptist Church sang praise to our Lord. Southeast Area Minister, Rev. Jim Anderson, finished the evening with some Resurrection Sunday thoughts and two new songs. A reception was held afterward and great food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.



*Pictured above is one of the church choirs participating in the Hopewell Association Choir Festival: Millbrook Baptist Church.*

## Southwest Area News

**Max Hill**, Southwest Area Minister

### ***Diamond Baptist Church Ordains Kenneth Woods***

On March 19, 2017, Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) held a service of deacon ordination for Kenneth Woods. The afternoon service was well attended, not only by members of Diamond Baptist Church, but of other Kanawha Valley churches as well. Pastor, Rick Pursley delivered the charge and West Virginia Baptist Convention Southwest Area Minister, Max Hill preached the ordination sermon. The service was followed by a delicious meal in the church's fellowship hall.



**Kenneth Woods**

### ***Kanawha Valley Association Holds Annual Traveling Revival***

From April 2-8, 2017, the Kanawha Valley Association held its annual traveling revival. The well attended series of meetings were held in different churches each night. Pastors and special musicians from each of the participating churches led the worship. Those churches that participated were: Judson Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Marmet First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Chesapeake First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Cedar Grove Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Handley Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) and Standard First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley). These meetings are a source of great fellowship and camaraderie for the churches. Standard First Baptist Church served a fine meal following the final service.

### ***West Virginia Baptists Visit Cuba***

From April 21 - May 1, 2017, a group of eight West Virginia Baptists visited Cuba. They had the opportunity to minister with several churches of the Fraternity of Cuban Baptist Churches. The group was led by Area Ministers, Max Hill (Southwest) and David Hulme (Northeast), and included Valerie Hulme, Melinda and Brian Greathouse, Bob Ratliff, Douglas Eitel and Danny Franke. The group stayed at Jordan Baptist Church in Havana, which served as their home base. There they stayed with church members, worshiped, visited church families and preached. Valerie Hulme and Melinda Greathouse led a Saturday children's event. They directed the children in games, songs, a Bible story and helped them make Mother's Day cards.

As part of their itinerary, the group traveled into the interior to visit two churches in Villa Clara Province. They stayed in homes of church members in Ranchuelo, where the group assisted with evening worship and David Hulme preached. This church is the daughter church of the Jordan Church. At the Faithful Remnant Baptist Church, in Zulueta, the group worshiped and Max Hill preached. This is a small church in a rural town where soccer was first introduced to Cuba.

On their last weekend in the country, the group visited La Finca Molino Verde (Green Windmill Farm), which is the Fraternity's national camp near Havana. This 90-bed camp has hosted other West Virginia Baptist groups. The last Sunday of the trip, the group visited and worshiped with Emmanuel Christian Community in San Jose de Las Lajas, the capital of Mayabeque Province. This is another of the churches where the West Virginia Baptist Convention has long standing relationships.

**Mark McCloy**, Northwest Area Minister

## **Streams of Revival**

Andrew Murray once said, "A true revival means nothing less than a revolution, casting out the spirit of worldliness and selfishness, and making God and His love triumph in the heart and life." From my childhood, I can remember many such personal "revolutions." Whether at camp, at a conference or class or at a traditional revival meeting, all of us can occasionally use a spiritual refresher. As most likely is true with you, I have often found those times when gathered with other like-minded people seeking the presence of God.

The Good Hope Association conducted such a series of meetings last week with their second annual association revival. Each night, a different church hosted, a different pastor spoke and special music was provided by one or two churches (sometimes with a choir, other times with a soloist or group). The host church of the night provided a simple meal, which made it easier for people coming directly from work. The result was an uplifting and refreshing time. Each night saw near capacity crowds as the churches came together to support and uplift one another, and also to seek self-renewal.



*Members of the Good Hope Association gather together to worship the Lord at their second annual association revival.*

If you are looking for such renewal and would seek to duplicate such an event, learn from some of the principles at work here. First, there is strength in coming together. We often talk about "Where two or three are gathered." If a few is good, then it stands to reason a few more won't hurt a thing. In other words, find some other churches and do something together.

Gain energy from one another. The gathering can take different forms (a youth gathering, a bonfire, a community picnic, a sing, a concert or even a traditional revival). Secondly, understand that people are busy. It is not hard to find an excuse to stay home. Therefore, give people some good reasons to come out. Something like: a free meal will be provided, come to support your pastor or choir or singing group or youth leader or maybe "It is at our church tonight." If you want kids to be there, then plan on something for kids to do. If you want young families, plan on providing childcare. Finally, promote it - a lot.

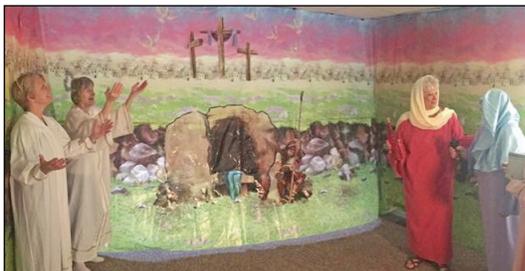
No one will be there unless they know it is happening. And remember this one special truth, when God's people come together, it's fun!

## **Northeast Area News**

**David Hulme**, Northeast Area Minister

### **Beulah Baptist Hosts "Walk-Through Easter Story"**

Beulah Baptist Church (Union) presented a "Walk-Through Easter Story," Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Live scenes, depicting the Last Supper through the Resurrection, were presented in a dramatic and creative way. David Bess, pastor of Beulah Baptist Church, said the community outreach event was successful in presenting the Easter message to the community and surrounding area.



### **Fairmont and Union Associations Hold Annual Lenten Services**

Both the Fairmont and Union Associations continued their traditions of holding joint evening worship services during Lent. Services were held at a different church, with a different speaker, each week. The host church provided refreshments and a time of fellowship following each service. These annual services are a meaningful time and very well-attended.

### **Morgantown First Celebrates 175th Anniversary**

Morgantown First Baptist Church (Goshen) celebrated their 175th Anniversary, during morning worship on May 7, 2017. Dr. David L. Carrico, Executive Minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention, delivered the anniversary sermon. Also participating in the service were Rev. David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister and Rev. Richard Hepler. A dinner followed the service.



*Dr. David Carrico (left) and former Morgantown First Baptist Church pastor and author, Dr. Truett Rogers.*

November 2016 - April 2017

**ELMA ELIZABETH ALLEN**, 99, of Belle, died March 11, 2017. She was a member of Judson Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where she was a member of the Lydia Sunday School class, American Baptist Women's Ministries, the choir and also served as a Sunday School teacher.

**MARY P. BOWE**, 81, of Marmet, died April 8, 2017. She was a member of Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) since February 1966.

**AVIS "MARIE" BOWYER**, 79, of Harrisville, died March 26, 2017. She was a member of Harrisville Baptist Church (Harrisville).

**PENNY SUE BOYLES**, 75, of Clarksburg died April 19, 2017. She was a member of Clarksburg Baptist Church (Union), where she was involved in the Fellowship class, Young at Heart and the church choir.

**DOROTHY GULLEY BURNETTE**, 89, of Scott Depot, died April 29, 2017. She was a member of Judson Baptist Church (Teays Valley), where she served as choir director for many years.

**ROBERT "BOB" FLEETWOOD BYUS**, 88, died April 1, 2017. He was a lifelong member of Madison Baptist Church (Coal River), where he served as a deacon and on various other committees.

**SYBILLA M. CAUDILL**, 88, of Madison, died April 1, 2017. She was a lifelong member of Madison Baptist Church (Coal River), where she was the organist for 46 years and an active member of Baptist women's groups at all levels. She assisted with youth groups and church choirs and volunteered as a preschool teacher.

**ELIZABETH ALTA DEERING**, 82, of Belva, died April 7, 2017. She was a member of Swiss Baptist Church (Hopewell), where she served as clerk and treasurer.

**SALLY JEAN DODGSON**, 88, of Penfield, New York, died March 6, 2017. She was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumna who served in

India.

**ARTHUR B. DUCKWORTH**, 88, of Liberty Lake, Washington, formerly of Ravenswood, died March 31, 2017. He was a member of Ravenswood First Baptist Church (Good Hope), where he served as a trustee for many years.

**JAMES VICTOR ELLIFRITT**, 60, died March 21, 2017. He was a lifelong member of Clarksburg Baptist Church (Union), where he served as treasurer for many years.

**CHARLES "SHARKY" DUNLAP GIBEAUT**, 89, died March 8, 2017. He was a member of Poca Baptist Church (Teays Valley) for 50 plus years, where he served as song leader, Sunday School teacher, superintendent, trustee, chairman of the deacon board and janitor.

**ALICE GIFFIN**, 101, of Claremont, California, died February 27, 2017. She was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumna.

**LOLA BUTCHER GIVEN**, 92, of Springfield, Missouri, formerly of Frametown, died April 25, 2017. She was a longtime member of Hope Baptist Church (Elk Valley) and served for several years on the general board of American Baptist Churches.

**OLGA NADINE HEMMINGS**, 88, of Diamond, died April 30, 2017. She was a member of Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) since November 1971.

**JOANNA MONTGOMERY HODGES**, 77, of Jupiter, Florida, died November 7, 2016. She was an American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS) and American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumna.

**MARY MARIE HOLLEY**, 88, of Ravenswood, died March 12, 2017. She was a member of Milhoan Ridge Baptist Church (Good Hope), where she served many years as a Sunday School teacher and was a member of the women's circle.

**MARILYN A. HUNWICK**, 86, of Palo Alto, California, died February 17, 2017. She was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumna.

**VERA L. KELLEY**, 87, of Rainelle, died, March 17, 2017. She was a member of Rainelle First Baptist Church (Hopewell), where she served as the assistant music director.

**DEBORAH GAYLE PRICE LEIGH**, 59, of Buckhannon, died April 5, 2017. She was a member of Buckhannon First Baptist Church (Broad Run), where she was a Sunday School teacher, children's worker, youth worker for several years, director of Vacation Bible School, director of the clown ministry and director of the puppet ministry. She worked in the chapel office at West Virginia Wesleyan College for over ten years.

**DONNA LEE LEMLEY**, 64, of Harrisville, died March 14, 2017. She was a member of Harrisville Baptist Church (Harrisville).

**MILDRED "MILLIE" LORETTA LEWIS**, 89, Buckhannon, died April 23, 2017. She was a devoted member of Tallmansville Baptist Church (Broad Run).

**DONALD A. LOWE, SR.**, 98, died March 20, 2017. He pastored Baptist churches in these communities: Maple Fork, Quinnimont, Prosperity, New Salem, Rock Camp, Gates, Broad Run, Sweet Springs, Union and Mount Prospect. In the later years of his life, he was a member of Breckenridge Missionary Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh), where he taught the Fellowship Class.

**MILDRED KATHERINE MCGHEE**, 92, of Kingwood, died March 28, 2017. She was a longtime member of Kingwood Baptist Church (Goshen), where she sang in the choir, served as a deaconess and was active with American Baptist Women's Ministries.

**WILLIAM E. MEDLEY, JR.**, 88, of Saint Albans, died April 11, 2017. He was a member of Saint Albans First Baptist Church (Teays Valley). Always active in

Continued on page 14 ...

... Continued from page 13

the life of the church, he participated frequently in voluntary roles and responsibilities. He served the church as a teacher and deacon, and enjoyed years working with the building care team.

**JOHN EDWARD ONEY**, 76, of Charleston, died April 8, 2017. He served as a deacon at Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley) in the 1980s and at Oakwood Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) since the early 1990s.

**VIRGINIA DALE PEARSON**, 91, of Eugene, Oregon, died January 5, 2017. She was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumna.

**GLADYS MOSLEY NELSON PETERSON**, 90, of Austin, Texas, died December 28, 2016. She was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) staff alumna.

**JAMES PRESTON, JR.**, 89, of Williamson, died April 24, 2017. He was a longtime member of Williamson First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo), where he served as a member of the Board of Deacons, Board of Christian Education and was a former Sunday School superintendent.

**BEULAH A. "BOOTS" RADCLIFF**, 88, of Mineral Wells, died March 29, 2017. She

was a member of Sams Creek First Baptist Church (Parkersburg) and taught Sunday School for many years.

**ZELDA LORENE (WILSON) RHODES**, 93, of Sutton, died April 29, 2017. She was a member of Stump Chapel (Elk Valley), where she served in various church ministries and was a choir member.

**HARRY MINNIGH ROGERS, JR.** (known to many as "Mick"), died April 7, 2017. He was a member of Broad Run Baptist Church (Broad Run) for more than 50 years and was a deacon.

**ELOISE "ELLIE" SMITH**, 87, of Dunbar, died March 7, 2017. She was a faithful member of Dunbar First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) for over 60 years during which time she served as a deaconess, sang in the Chancel Choir, directed the children's choir for several years and served on many boards.

**WILLIAM CARTER (W.C.) TOTTEN**, died March 24, 2017. He was a longtime member of Connolly Memorial Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo), where he served as a song leader, deacon and trustee.

**PHILIP J. UHLINGER**, 93, of Claremont, California, died January 16, 2017. He was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumnus.

**BETTY VALENTINE**, 87, of Elizabeth, died February 1, 2017. She was a member of Newark Baptist Church (Parkersburg).

**RODNEY D. VANNOY**, 69, of Scott Depot, died March 12, 2017. He was a member of Judson Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where he served as head trustee. He was also a member of the American Baptist Men and served on the Board of Christian Education.

**SYLVIA WASHBURN**, 81, died March 10, 2017. She was an active member of Jacksonville, Florida First United Methodist Church, and most recently attended Weston First Baptist Church (Broad Run). In addition, she participated in her church choir, often singing on choir tours in Europe.

**CLYDE JESSE WHITWORTH, JR.**, 83, died April 24, 2017. He was a member of Charleston Baptist Temple (Kanawha Valley) and former member of South Charleston First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley). He served on the Diaconate Boards at both churches, often as chairman. He also served on the Finance Board at Charleston Baptist Temple and was active in American Baptist Men at South Charleston First Baptist Church.

## 2017 CAMP COWEN SCHEDULE

<b>OLDER MIDLER (grades 3-4)</b> . . . . .	June 4-7
<b>YOUNGER MIDLER (grades 2-4)</b> . . . . .	June 9-11
<b>JUNIOR 1 (grades 5-6)</b> . . . . .	June 11-17
<b>JUNIOR HIGH 1 (grades 7-9)</b> . . . . .	June 18-24
<b>JUNIOR 2 (grades 5-6)</b> . . . . .	June 25-July 1
<b>HIGH SCHOOL 1 (grades 9-high school grads)</b> . . . . .	July 2-8
<b>JUNIOR HIGH 2 (grades 7-9)</b> . . . . .	July 9-15
<b>SENIOR DAY (2017 high school grads)</b> . . . . .	July 15
<b>HIGH SCHOOL 2 (grades 9-high school grads)</b> . . . . .	July 16-22
<b>FAMILY CAMP</b> . . . . .	July 28-31
<b>AMERICAN BAPTIST MEN AND BOYS' CAMP</b> . . . . .	August 4-6
<b>CAMP GLOBAL</b> . . . . .	August 11-13

*All registration forms are available by calling Jennifer at the West Virginia Baptist Convention office at 304.422.6449. You may download any of the registration forms at [www.campcowen.org](http://www.campcowen.org). Don't forget to print a health form for each individual attending.*

The West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen camping program is sponsored by the West Virginia Baptist Convention and is conducted at 276 Baptist Camp Road, Cowen, West Virginia 26206.

# 152nd Annual Meeting

of the  
**West Virginia Baptist Convention**

## October 19-20, 2017

New Baptist Church, Huntington

**Theme: Bridge of Hope**



**Keynote Speaker: Jeffrey D. Jones**  
associate pastor of Ministerial Leadership  
and director of Ministry Studies at  
Andover Newton Theological School

**Annual Sermon Speaker:**  
**Trent Eastman**  
pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Huntington

## June

**JUNE 1** - Kurt Smalley, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Hungary  
**JUNE 2** - American Baptist Women's Ministries' Annual Conference this weekend at Parchment Valley Conference Center  
**JUNE 3** - The ministry of Racine First Baptist Church; Anthony Pratt, pastor (Coal River)  
**JUNE 4** - Older Midler Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JUNE 5** - Don Phares, moderator, Goshen Association  
**JUNE 6** - The ministry of Bethesda Baptist Church; David Cyphers, pastor (Fairmont)  
**JUNE 7** - The ministry of Beaver First Baptist Church; Steve Gibson, interim pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)  
**JUNE 8** - Phil Smith, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Brazil  
**JUNE 9** - Younger Midler Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JUNE 10** - The ministry of Mount Urim Baptist Church (Hopewell)  
**JUNE 11** - Junior I Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JUNE 12** - Sherry Goldsberg, president, American Baptist Women's Ministries and member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Outreach Commission  
**JUNE 13** - The ministry of Hope Christian Center; Michael Lewis, pastor (Guyandotte)  
**JUNE 14** - Sarah McCurdy, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Costa Rica  
**JUNE 15** - Vital Pierre, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Dominican Republic  
**JUNE 16** - Shirley Fitzwater, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission  
**JUNE 17** - The ministry of Union Baptist Church; Jerome Lewis, pastor (Union)  
**JUNE 18** - Junior High I Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JUNE 19** - The ministry of Dorcas Baptist Church; Steve Davis, pastor (Eastern)  
**JUNE 20** - Katherine Niles, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**JUNE 21** - Bonita Meredith, treasurer, Judson Association  
**JUNE 22** - Mike Kelly, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission  
**JUNE 23** - The ministry of New England Baptist Church; Roger Johnson, pastor (Parkersburg)  
**JUNE 24** - The West Virginia Baptist Convention Worship Conference today at Clarksburg Baptist Church (Union)  
**JUNE 25** - Valma Adams, office manager, West Virginia Baptist Convention  
**JUNE 26** - Brothers' Keeper happens this week at Parchment Valley Conference Center  
**JUNE 27** - Junior II Camp happens this week at Camp Cowen  
**JUNE 28** - Celestyna Hoefle, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Thailand  
**JUNE 29** - The ministry of Ten Mile Baptist Church; Bradley Tenney, pastor (Broad Run)  
**JUNE 30** - Scott McClure, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission

*West Virginia Baptist Convention staff and missionaries listed are on the occasion of their birthday.*

## July

**JULY 1** - Sherry Powers, moderator, Broad Run Association  
**JULY 2** - High School I Camp happens this week at Camp Cowen  
**JULY 3** - The ministry of Wayne Baptist Church; Fred Ferguson, pastor (Twelve Pole)  
**JULY 4** - Hefziba Aragon, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Mexico  
**JULY 5** - The ministry of Turkey Creek Missionary Baptist Church; Glenn Hatfield, pastor (Rockcastle)  
**JULY 6** - Steve Wilson, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Outreach Commission  
**JULY 7** - The ministry of Yawkey Missionary Baptist Church; Chester Bird, interim pastor (Coal River)  
**JULY 8** - Tim Rice, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**JULY 9** - Junior High II Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JULY 10** - The ministry of Weirton Heights Memorial Baptist Church; Holley Faulkner, pastor (Panhandle)  
**JULY 11** - Madeline Flores-Lopez, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Dominican Republic  
**JULY 12** - The ministry of Summersville Baptist Church; Dana Gatewood, pastor (Hopewell)  
**JULY 13** - Colleen Bumgarner, clerk, Parkersburg Association  
**JULY 14** - The ministry of Maysel Missionary Baptist Church (Elk Valley)  
**JULY 15** - Elianna McCurdy, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Costa Rica  
**JULY 16** - High School II Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JULY 17** - Scott Whetzel, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission  
**JULY 18** - The ministry of Concord Baptist Church; Richard Tench, pastor (Teays Valley)  
**JULY 19** - Katrina Williams, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**JULY 20** - The ministry of Marmet First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley)  
**JULY 21** - Gordon Hwang, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Japan  
**JULY 22** - Bill Morningstar, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Leadership Commission  
**JULY 23** - The ministry of Belington First Baptist Church; Julia Miller, pastor (Union)  
**JULY 24** - The ministry of Rock Grove Baptist Church; Benjamin Hall, pastor (Broad Run)  
**JULY 25** - Ruth Mooney, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Costa Rica  
**JULY 26** - The ministry of Two Ripple Baptist Church; Gary Richmond, pastor (Parkersburg)  
**JULY 27** - The Rockcastle Association Annual Meeting happens today at Oceana First Baptist Church (Rockcastle)  
**JULY 28** - Family Camp begins today at Camp Cowen  
**JULY 29** - The ministry of Rush Run Baptist Church; John Vannoy, pastor (Little Kanawha)  
**JULY 30** - Rob Ely, director, Student Ministries, West Virginia Baptist Convention  
**JULY 31** - David Hoge, second vice-president, West Virginia Baptist Convention and member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission

# Coming Events

## JUNE

### June 2-4

American Baptist Women's Ministries  
Annual Conference  
Parchment Valley Conference Center

### June 4-7

Older Midler Camp (grades 3-4)  
Camp Cowen

### June 9-11

Younger Midler Camp (grades 2-4)  
Camp Cowen

### June 11-17

Junior 1 Camp (grades 5-6)  
Camp Cowen

### June 18-24

Junior High 1 Camp (grades 7-9)  
Camp Cowen

### June 24

Worship Conference  
Clarksburg Baptist Church

### June 24

School of Christian Studies  
West Virginia Baptist History (E-02)  
One-Day Class with Allan Copenhagen  
Parchment Valley Conference Center

### June 25-30

Brothers' Keeper  
Parchment Valley Conference Center

### June 25-July 1

Junior 2 Camp (grades 5-6)  
Camp Cowen

### June 30 - July 2

Mission Summit ABC/USA Biennial  
Portland, Oregon

## JULY

### July 2-8

High School 1 Camp  
(grades 9-graduates)  
Camp Cowen

### July 4

Independence Day Holiday  
West Virginia Baptist Convention  
Office CLOSED

### July 9-15

Junior High 2 Camp (grades 7-9)  
Camp Cowen

### July 15

Senior Day (high school graduates)  
Camp Cowen

## West Virginia Baptist Newsletter Submissions

Send submissions for *The West Virginia Baptist* to: [thewvbaptist@wvbc.org](mailto:thewvbaptist@wvbc.org) or mail submissions to the West Virginia Baptist Convention, Attention: Donna, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, West Virginia 26102. If you are submitting text, send typed copy only. We no longer accept handwritten text. We also accept hard copy and digital photos of 300 dpi (dots per inch). Please include a caption for your photo and your name and address if you want your photo returned.

Deadline for submission is the 3rd of odd numbered months.

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American Baptist Women's Ministries  
of West Virginia

## WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

June 2-4, 2017

Parchment Valley Conference Center

**Speakers:**  
**Jeff and Beth**  
**Davenport**

Jeff is senior pastor of  
Hurricane First Baptist  
Church (Teays Valley).

**Theme:**  
**"Getting to Know**  
**You"**



*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. Ephesians 1:17*

**For more information, visit [www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org) or contact Kim Mack,  
Conference Coordinator Elect at 304.206.8247 or  
[kmack@cycloswv.com](mailto:kmack@cycloswv.com).**

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